

“Pacific Rim Uprising”

By Helen Lutz

Television was a really cool thing when I was growing up. Just about everyone could receive the three main networks if we turned the rabbit ears just so and added the right amount of tin foil. Saturday nights were among my favorite TV nights. My family would gather with popcorn to watch ‘Saturday Night at the Movies’. Since there was no video capability, we waited patiently for movies to move from theaters to television. Eventually we got to see the 1964 movie “Mothra vs. Godzilla.” It was fun to listen to my dad as he teased about the sound dubbing – the mouths didn’t match the words. Godzilla created mayhem through the miniature cities – there was no CGI.



We’ve come a long way baby! “Pacific Rim Uprising” brings the excitement of the Japanese monsters to life on theater screens everywhere. Godzilla and Mothra have long since passed away, but new Japanese creatures, the Kaiju, whose invasion was thwarted years ago, wait patiently for a new breach in the Earth’s core to continue their attack on mankind.

Mankind defeated the Kaiju by creating human piloted robots – big, big robots called Jaegers and sealing the breach in the core. Over the years the planet has experienced a period of safety. We meet Jake Pentecost (John Boyega) who is a bit of a crook. He scrounges Jaeger junk yards to procure/steal usable parts which might be of value on the underground market. Jake is not the only one in this line of work. Locating an old power cell from a defunct Jaeger, a newcomer gets to it first leaving him empty-handed; something not appreciated by his ‘employers.’ Chasing the thief, Jake finally locates young Amara Namani (Cailee Spaeny). Amara has been working diligently to build her own Jaeger and it’s almost ready to roll.

Unfortunately for Amara and Jake, their location in the restricted Jaeger junk yard is detected by authorities. A giant Jaeger shows up to take them into custody – after a chase of course. The Pan Pacific Defense Corps don’t appreciate rogue Jaegers, nor do they appreciate Jake. Jake’s father was the hero Jaeger pilot who gave his life to seal the original breach protecting the planet from the Kaiju monsters. Jake has turned his back on the Corps preferring to scavenge junk yards and basically waste his life.

It just so happens that Jake’s sister is in charge of the Defense Corps and encourages him to return to his calling as a Jaeger pilot; pilots are in short supply. A contract from an enormous Asian contractor to create new Jaegers which are drone controlled eliminates the interjection of the human pilot element. The new Jaegers appear too good to be true – so what could possibly go wrong?

One bad apple can spoil the whole bunch and that’s also true with people. A well-placed executive within the drone company has other plans for the new drone Jaegers. One problem with great big companies is that it’s much easier to hide secrets; secret work that turns deadly. Amara’s skills have landed her in the pilot academy while Jake is coerced to rejoin the force. Their abilities will soon be needed when a new breach opens and the world again at risk.

“Pacific Rim Uprising” takes us on rock ‘em and sock ‘em ride with giant robots, giant monsters, good guys and bad guys. Unlike “Mothra vs. Godzilla” the CGI is big and loud and the action nonstop. If you are a fan of Japanese monsters, especially those who scale Mt. Fuji (I climbed Mt. Fuji – not easy) then the movie is well worth the price of admission with a large popcorn. On a scale of one to four Hart Beats I give “Pacific Rim Uprising”... TWO HARTS. It’s fun to see how much Scott Eastwood, one of the Jaeger pilots, is like his father.